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President: Mr. BUTLER (Australia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AN AGENDA FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/48/935)

The PRESIDENT welcomed the Secretary-General to the high-level segment.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that he attached great importance to the initiative of the Agenda for Development, whose preparation was entering a new phase, especially because of the positive effects it could have on the lives of millions of people who currently suffered deprivation and distress. In the preface to the Agenda, he had emphasized that he had sought to gather the widest range of views on development-related issues, and thus had asked for submissions from all Member States, various agencies of the United Nations system and a number of public and private sources on a world-wide basis. Once again, he thanked all who had offered their valuable contributions to that exercise.

However, he continued to assume full responsibility for that text. That did not mean that it was a perfect and definitive document; its purpose was to provide a basis for general considerations on the development policy that the United Nations should pursue in order to meet the economic and social challenges before it.

He had followed closely the response, comments and suggestions which the document had already prompted, and was particularly grateful to those who had sent him their views in writing. It was his hope that the Agenda for Development would represent a collective effort involving all, and therefore, he hoped that he could continue to receive the support and collaboration of all in refining the conclusions and in presenting a set of practical recommendations.

He also took the opportunity to congratulate and thank the President of the General Assembly for having organized, a few weeks earlier, hearings on the Agenda for Development, which he had followed with the utmost attention. He also awaited with great interest the report of the President of the General Assembly on those hearings, and on the consultations which had taken place on the Agenda over the past few months.

(The Secretary-General)

The original approach taken by the President of the General Assembly had been particularly productive, and the ideas expressed during the consultations had led to stimulating and constructive exchanges of opinion. The favourable comments he had received regarding the general tone of those discussions suggested to him that many regretted that such encounters were not more frequent, and he agreed that more such meetings should be held in the future within the Organization.

Although it was difficult to summarize the various proposals regarding the Agenda for Development, with the material available a few conclusions could be outlined. First of all, it seemed that a consensus was emerging on what had been referred to as the five dimensions of development: peace, the economy, the environment, social justice and democracy. No doubt there could be varying opinions on the relative importance of each of those factors and on the order in which they should be arranged, but there was general agreement that development was a global phenomenon that could not be reduced to its economic dimension alone.

Within that general framework, everyone agreed that economic growth remained the engine of development. No doubt growth was not independent of peace, the environment, society and democracy, but qualitative changes in all those areas often demanded increased resources that only economic growth could generate.

The second element on which there appeared to be broad agreement was the ethical and moral perspective of development. The planet inherited from the generations which had gone before was being borrowed from the children of the future. There was a responsibility to future generations to ensure that the world they would inherit was more peaceful, more equitable, healthier, more human and more democratic than the one that currently existed. In brief, a new quality of life must be invented. That was a responsibility which fell on all strata of society, whether locally, nationally or globally.

Thirdly, all agreed that the time was ripe for an agenda for development, not only because of the momentous political changes that had occurred in the world in recent years, with the ending of East-West antagonism and the cold war, but also because the very notion of development had changed. On the one hand, the concept needed to be expanded, but it must also be realized that the responsibility for development should be understood more broadly. The number of

(The Secretary-General)

actors in development had grown and their roles had changed. Those factors forced the United Nations to take a new approach. All the social actors - Governments, private enterprise, communities, institutions and individuals - were constantly redefining their role and function, and periodically examining their conscience. It was high time for the United Nations to do the same. The fiftieth anniversary of the Organization must be an occasion to rethink and reinvent its policy towards economic and social development, and the agenda for development should help to meet that objective.

On that basis, he stressed the need to engage in some thinking about what could be called a new international development ethic. That ethic, which was also a peace ethic, could not be built overnight. It was the product of constant effort and would evolve over time. It was a long-term investment from which, individually and collectively, the world could only benefit. Too often in the world, and especially in the United Nations in recent years, it was necessary to tackle urgent problems at the expense of deep-seated problems. The proliferation of armed conflicts had required perhaps an excessive share of attention.

Precisely because of that cruel alternative between emergency and long-term solutions, the United Nations must study more carefully the link between peace and development. And, at the operational level, it must accept all the consequences of that thinking process. He was convinced that development was necessary to ensure peace in the long term, particularly in the modern world. The fact that a given situation did not appear to be urgent should not keep the United Nations from taking appropriate action. Therefore, all social actors must be convinced that development required a long-term approach rather than the stopgap responses often chosen by political decision-makers. If that effort succeeded in the long term, the need for emergency action would be reduced.

Global economic growth, which was the second dimension of development, seemed to be on better footing than in the past. Some third world countries, especially in Asia, had witnessed spectacular, unprecedented development. Nevertheless, such situations were much too limited and were far from being universal.

Once again, the great outsider in terms of development was still Africa, where a majority of the adult population was worse off economically than the

(The Secretary-General)

preceding generation. Unfortunately, unless vigorous, radical measures were taken immediately, the same would be true of future generations.

Lastly, he stressed the social dimension of that development ethic. In the Agenda for Development, he had already stated that it was one of the essential dimensions of the issue.

It was well known that development was primarily concerned with human beings. Admittedly, considerable progress had been made, but its benefits were far from being equally distributed. That had brought with it intolerable manifestations of exclusion and marginalization that had in some cases challenged the cohesion of social structures, a theme that would be at the core of the deliberations at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in March 1995.

In the meantime, in the Agenda, he had strongly emphasized the fact that development was only truly meaningful when it was undertaken in a spirit of concern for a more just and equitable sharing of burdens and rewards. For the same reason, democratic values and the participation of all citizens were the essential elements of development. He was deeply convinced that the development process had to be accompanied by the espousal of democratic principles if it were to have meaning and an objective that went beyond the mere accumulation of wealth. As was well known, enormous advances were still to be made in that regard.

The application of certain concepts set forth in the Agenda should make it possible to press on and identify specific approaches that could make development a concrete reality world wide. It was necessary to take advantage of the present special moment to ponder the real meaning of development, the new mechanisms to be established and the new courses of action to be embarked upon.

In the context of the debate in which he had sought to engage in the Agenda, he felt that priority attention had to be given those groups that currently lacked one or another of the dimensions of development. It was first of all necessary to respond to the concerns of the neediest and to meet the needs of the world's underprivileged.

He would be fully receptive and attentive to all comments and criticisms, and hoped that with everyone's collaboration it would be possible to formulate programmes that would ensure that the Agenda for Development would become a part of the everyday life of mankind.

(The Secretary-General)

He had undertaken to present his conclusions and recommendations on the Agenda for Development during the next session of the General Assembly. He was relying heavily on the Council to help him fulfil that commitment. On the basis of the oral and written suggestions and proposals put forward by Member States, as well as on the basis of the report of the President of the General Assembly, he intended to submit an addendum to the document to be submitted to the Assembly at its forthcoming session.

He made three points by way of conclusion. Firstly, it was necessary to be aware of the fact that there were no miracle remedies. Development had been spoken of for four or five decades, so a few months would hardly be sufficient time to elaborate a new development model. Secondly, it was necessary to avoid considering development in simplified terms. Ensuring understanding of the complexity of the very concept of development, and of its content, was the chief objective of the Agenda. All parties had made errors in that field. Development had been viewed as transferring the Western model of production and consumption to the underdeveloped countries. Then it had been approached in the context of countermodels. The limitations of all those policies could now be seen. Thus it was not a question of proposing a new development model, but rather a set of guidelines, suggestions and incentives.

Moreover, and thirdly, there was such a wide range of economic and social situations at the national and regional levels that conclusions had to be presented with the greatest caution.

That should not limit inventiveness: the United Nations should play an important, if not a fundamental, role in global and sustainable development. He was also convinced that the United Nations, with the support of the Member States, had the ability to do so.

Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana), President of the General Assembly, said that when the President of the Economic and Social Council had asked him to speak to the Economic and Social Council on the Agenda for Development, he had hesitated to accept. During the previous months, he had organized broad-based consultations on An Agenda for Development, including the World Hearings on Development held three weeks previously. However, he was still reflecting on the wide variety of views expressed and distilling the summary that the General Assembly had mandated him to present to the Secretary-General. It therefore seemed to him inappropriate to speak at great length on his findings.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

He would instead simply offer a few observations that he had made during the consultations and Hearings that, although not exhaustive, would nevertheless be indicative of the wide range of issues addressed, which constituted some of the main elements that should be taken into account in the elaboration of any agenda for development.

The first was that market-driven globalization was an increasingly important development affecting all countries, directly or indirectly, positively or negatively. That trend seemed to be an irreversible reality. From the policy point of view, one of its major consequences was the erosion of the ability of Governments to determine economic or social outcomes. Non-State actors were becoming increasingly decisive. Manufacturing and production now occurred in great trans-border networks, with the flow of financial capital and labour also taking place in unprecedented ways. With the addition to that of concerns for the environment and health as factors in global affairs, the need to widen the range of participants in any dialogue became an imperative, at international as well as national levels.

A second observation was that development had to be, above all else, people-centred. It had to involve broad participation and empowerment of people, particularly women. Self-help was a key ingredient for successful development, but transnational cooperation and assistance, governmental and non-governmental, remained necessary to support indigenous efforts. Such a notion of people-centred development must inevitably include a greater investment in human resources; to that end, many of the Expert Witnesses who had testified had suggested that education, health and welfare provisions should be accorded the highest priority in all societies, along with the provision of official development assistance. An agenda for development had to seek to further enhance the framework for international cooperation in these areas.

A third conclusion concerned peace, security and development, which were inter-related and mutually reinforcing. Conditions of peace were essential for long-term development. On the other hand, lack of development, poverty and unemployment could breed social conflicts and political instability. Arms production and sales needed to be restrained, with the members of the Security Council, particularly the Permanent Five, showing the way, and by regional bodies monitoring arms flows at the regional level and with some confidence-

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building measures that would help to promote their members' efforts towards peaceful development.

A fourth conclusion that he inferred from the Hearings and consultations was that the market could be an efficient instrument for development and that the State and the market could be mutually supportive. However, Governments still had to play a key strategic role in providing physical and social infrastructure and sound macroeconomic management to create an enabling environment for the private sector.

A fifth observation was that although market-driven forces were rapidly increasing the supply of capital and facilitating development in a limited - albeit growing - number of developing countries, the levels, quality and impact of official development assistance remained a cause of concern. Perhaps the time had come for development financing to be achieved in more innovative ways, recognizing the necessity for stronger forms of official commitments, even statutory ones, but also treating with the role of the private sector and other actors in creating a true partnership for development.

A sixth observation was that a more comprehensive and cooperative solution to the overall official debt problem, particularly of the least-developed and African countries, was critical and urgent, as debt-servicing difficulties constituted a major constraint on economic growth and development.

His seventh observation was that with respect to trade, allowances had to be made for low-income commodity exporting countries, particularly in Africa, whose probable net gain from the outcome of the Uruguay Round was negative or in some cases nil.

Lastly, his consultations had underscored the conviction that an environment for better management of global macroeconomic policy was required that took seriously into account the interests of poor as well as rich countries and that the concept of interdependence among nations must underpin any agenda for global development.

Perhaps the current problem lay in trying to define the role of the United Nations and its relevance in international development cooperation. Much of the criticism that had been levelled at the United Nations had been focused on the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and participants in the consultations had repeatedly asked what the role of the United Nations should be in the various proposals for enhancing world development. In his opinion, there

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was a lack of clarity in that regard and it was becoming increasingly clear that the main actors in development were operating outside the United Nations system.

The fact that the development agenda was fading at the expense of the peace and security agenda was because the United Nations was accepted as the relevant body that dealt with peace and security; that was not so in the case of development. That was why an agenda for development should seek to establish the appropriate role of the United Nations in international development cooperation and identify ways and means of harmonizing and coordinating the interdependence between peace and development and the manner in which those issues were dealt with by Governments and the United Nations.

Finally, participants in the consultations had unanimously expressed the view that an agenda for development would not be a meaningful document if it did not propose radical reforms in the United Nations system, whose structure and functioning would otherwise become increasingly outdated and ineffective.

Mr. LAMAMRA (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the intention in proposing an agenda for development was to ensure that the United Nations once again gave priority to issues of development and international cooperation. That objective was now more relevant than ever before: it was based on the provisions of the Charter and on the imperatives of the world economic and social situation. At a recent special ministerial meeting of the Group of 77, special attention had been devoted to the initiative, on which a declaration had been adopted.

In his opinion, the current debate should come up with well-defined guidelines to encourage the Secretary-General to submit to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly a revised version of his report on an agenda for development that could lead to action and to the adoption of concrete measures.

Referring to the participation of the Group of 77 and China in the debate on the issue, he noted that an agenda for development must be based on the principle that there could be no peace without development. The international community and the United Nations must not abandon their concern for economic and social problems in order to deal exclusively with crisis management. Perhaps, after all, preventive development was even more promising than preventive diplomacy.

It was crucial to ensure that instead of wasting time on redefining development, the debate focused more on finding pragmatic solutions to

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challenges such as how to eradicate poverty, meet the basic needs of the population, create jobs for all, provide universal education, train women and ensure their advancement.

Development implied sustained economic growth capable of generating financial, institutional and technological resources that were the pillars of development. An agenda for development must consider the adverse consequences of structural adjustment programmes, which often sacrificed social priorities. The international economic environment was also a crucial factor for the success or failure of developing countries' efforts. The expectations generated by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was to have marked a new point of departure for international cooperation, had not been fulfilled. For its part, the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations was a unique event which must be used to improve the access of developing country exports to the markets of developed countries. In that regard, new forms of protectionism in the guise of social or environmental provisions must be avoided.

An agenda for development should give pride of place to strengthening the scientific and technological capacity of developing countries and providing for mechanisms and means of ensuring the effective transfer of technology to developing countries. Other means of mobilization and action were the support of the international community for South-South cooperation activities and the enhancement of regional and subregional integration initiatives of developing countries. That type of agenda could also stimulate more concrete responses to the problems of Africa.

Ultimately, the success of an agenda for development depended on the role of the United Nations and the resumption of the North-South dialogue. The agenda should serve as a catalyst for improving the coordination of the United Nations system as a whole, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and for defining more precisely the functions of the agencies and programmes. The most important thing was that the definition of an agenda for development was linked to the problem of international economic relations and the need to democratize international relations.

Finally, he pointed out that the agenda for development could serve as the starting-point for reactivation of the North-South dialogue through genuine and

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equitable participation of developing and developed countries. The United Nations would thus be able to play a more credible role.

Mr. PANGALOS (Greece), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the Secretary-General's report was a good basis for discussion, although it did not provide the essential guidance to Governments, international agencies and the United Nations itself as to how to address the so-called development crisis.

The new agenda for development must reflect the new political and economic realities. At the same time, it should include development priorities such as the reduction of world poverty, and focus attention on sustainable human development, enhance economic cooperation through association for sustainable growth within a stable world economy and, finally, give priority to the problems of least developed countries, especially in Africa.

The European Union endorsed the five dimensions of development mentioned in the World Hearings on Development relating to peace, the economy, the mechanisms of progress, justice, democracy and the role of the United Nations.

Concerning the first dimension, the combination of challenges and opportunities the modern world offered made it possible to build a safe, sound and equitable world economy based on cooperation. For their part, world events had wide-ranging and different consequences for all countries, and in the opinion of the European Union, the aim of an agenda for development should be to offer ideas on what development should be in a world in transition and, in particular, on the future role of the United Nations.

In discussing the agenda for development, it should be recalled that in adopting Agenda 21, the international community had agreed on a plan for sustainable development. There appeared to be a consensus on the need to assign a high priority to such aspects as the reduction of poverty and hunger, the development of human resources, institutional development and the improvement of population policies. In that connection, it was vital for the Cairo Conference to generate a programme of action.

With regard to justice, the design and implementation of social policies was essential to promoting equal opportunity for all members of society. Social policies should give priority to the most vulnerable groups; women's participation in all areas of society must be promoted, and unemployment must be fought both at the national level and through international cooperation.

(Mr. Pangalos, Greece)

There could be no sustainable human development without democracy and, accordingly, without respect for human rights. Recognition should be given to the link between democracy, development and human rights that had emerged from the Vienna Conference, as it was the basis for efforts by international and national organizations to promote progress in the field of human rights, pluralism and democratization.

The United Nations should respond more effectively to the new challenges of development; in that connection, it had the advantage of being able to adopt a coherent approach to the interaction between peace and development. The effectiveness of the General Assembly's political role in the dialogue on development and of the monitoring functions of the Economic and Social Council should be enhanced. The Agenda for Development should also envisage ways to promote better cooperation within the United Nations, including the specialized agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions.

The political consensus must be strengthened so as to enhance cooperation and action in specialized forums. Member States should demonstrate their willingness to deal with development issues while fully acknowledging the inseparability of world peace and international development. Thus, the role of the United Nations should be envisaged in the broader context of what governments viewed as the priority objectives to be pursued through development cooperation. The agenda for development should include specific proposals for strengthening the coordination of and the focal point for United Nations development activities, without impairing the capacity to meet the specific needs of various developing countries.

Lastly, in the view of the European Union, at a time when the world had changed radically and the political and economic situation was continuing to evolve rapidly, development must be envisaged from a different point of view. The United Nations needed to adapt to new realities: if the Agenda for Development was to be operative, the role of the United Nations in development must be reactivated.

The Secretary-General withdrew.

Mr. CHAN (Canada) stressed the importance of the debate on an agenda for development initiated by the Secretary-General, since there was currently a need to develop a new, broad focus on meeting needs in that area. The new context for development, which was very different from that of nearly 50 years

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earlier, when the founders of the United Nations had set the objective of creating a world order based on peace and economic and social progress, required an evaluation of the experience gained, as well as the setting of priorities.

In recent years, information about the United Nations had been centred on the Organization's role in crisis situations; it was unfortunate that discussions of development focused on the cost and on the inefficiency of the United Nations system. The opinion of the average citizen was that the economic and social system of the United Nations was unmanageable - in other words, that it did not function as a system. It was understandable that the United Nations should have been compelled to focus its efforts on security, emergency assistance and peace-keeping operations. However, in view of the difficult world situation, it was necessary to deal with the real causes of instability. Only through sustainable human development could progress towards a stable and democratic society be ensured, as noted by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "An agenda for development".

Canada believed that it was essential to examine the economic and social system of the United Nations on the basis of the following elements. First, the document entitled "An agenda for development" was timely, in view of the need to follow up the results of the Rio Summit, the Vienna Conference and the preparatory work for the conferences to be held in Cairo, Copenhagen, Beijing and Ankara. Secondly, while that document included basic elements of the broad concept of development, greater emphasis could be placed on some critical areas of social policies, such as the role of culture, population issues and women in development. Social progress was essential to sustainable development, for without it, economic development was incomplete and fragile. It was to be hoped that the concept of sustainable human development would be defined with greater precision. As noted by the Secretary-General in his report, solving the debt problem, sufficient access for all to the world trading system and good governance were among the issues to be faced by both developed and developing countries and were prerequisites for the success of all development strategies. While those issues had been considered before, they still required an efficient response. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, "An agenda for development" was essential for reordering the Organization's priorities. Only when clear priorities had been established could agreement be reached on a coherent

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programme of action and a division of labour aimed at strengthening the institutions of the system.

There was general agreement on the need to achieve sustainable human development and on the basic nature of the social dimension of development in terms of United Nations activities aimed at meeting the basic needs of individuals, alleviating poverty and enhancing human capabilities. Those concepts must be integrated into the operational priorities of the United Nations system.

Canada had participated in the efforts to reform the United Nations and had supported the preparation of "An agenda for development" at every stage. In accordance with Canadian proposals, "An agenda for development" should constitute a framework for formulating development policies, considering ways of improving the role of the United Nations and its relationship to the Bretton Woods institutions, and suggesting ways for the United Nations system and the international community to cooperate in carrying out the proposals. The Economic and Social Council, on the basis of the broad mandate conferred on it by the Charter of the United Nations, could play a valuable role in coordinating and designing policies within the United Nations system once the priorities and means of achieving them had been established. The work of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies should be examined on the basis of the comparative advantages of the United Nations system, including the specialized agencies, the regional and functional commissions, the Bretton Woods institutions and the new World Trade Organization. There was a need to define in practice the scope of those comparative advantages, and to determine which part of the system needed overhauling, should that prove necessary, as well as the optimal method of collecting data and putting an end to competition between the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for technical assistance projects; such projects should be executed through bilateral cooperation or by non-governmental organizations.

Canada believed that two further chapters should be included in "An agenda for development": first, a rigorous analysis of the comparative advantages in development of the economic and social system of the United Nations, the Bretton Woods institutions, the specialized agencies, the General Agreement on Tariffs

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and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization, and secondly, a new vision of the United Nations system, geared to promoting sustainable human development, which would serve as a frame of reference for national policies and as a source of inspiration for international cooperation. "An agenda for development" would help to enhance the role of the United Nations in development only if it included a broader vision of the future.

Mr. MARTIN (France) expressed full support for the statement delivered by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Union and said that 50 years after the establishment of the United Nations and the conclusion of the Bretton Woods agreements, the strategy for development and the role of the United Nations in that connection must be considered. The report of the Secretary-General, which covered five dimensions of development, formed a preliminary basis for defining that strategy. Of particular importance were the relationship between peace and development, the desirable symmetry between "An agenda for peace" and "An agenda for development", and the promotion of social concerns and environmental protection. A new concept must be elaborated on the basis of a global, shared vision of development, and on the basis of genuine cooperation in development activities, which would reflect the profound changes the developing world had experienced in recent years and the growing economic gap among the countries of the South. On the one hand, there was the rapid development of some of those countries, which enabled them to participate in the international economy and, on the other hand, there was the marginalization of the poorest countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, despite the assistance provided. More than ever, priority must be accorded to providing assistance to the least developed countries and, in particular, to the most disadvantaged strata. South-South cooperation must be stepped up, and, at the same time, the developed countries must forge a new commitment regarding assistance between those countries that were actually developing and those countries which remained on the sidelines of development. The developed countries must honour their obligations to finance development activities as part of their duty to show solidarity.

Since one of the basic conditions for development was the mobilization of the domestic resources of the countries of the South, the international community must provide assistance on a regular basis. In that connection, France had reaffirmed its goal of allocating 0.7 per cent of its gross national

(Mr. Martin, France)

product to development assistance between now and the year 2000. Since French development assistance had increased by 40 per cent in real terms in the past 13 years, it was very close to achieving that goal. France was fully aware of the burden which debt represented for the least developed countries. It had therefore forgiven the debt owed it by the 39 poorest countries, and it accorded priority to the question of the debt of the developing countries.

Economic progress could not be achieved without democracy. While, historically and geographically, the democracy had taken various forms, its spread enhanced the capacity to handle conflicts, reduce social divisiveness, ensure the sound management of public affairs and promote human resources and the full participation of women in development. Every effort must be made to ensure that the rule of law was established as the culmination of a necessarily gradual process.

Population growth and the local pressures that accompanied it, particularly in cases of international migration and large-scale urbanization, were key factors in development and should be accorded high priority in "An agenda for development".

The globalization of international relations and the liberalization of the economy and world trade illustrated the variety of elements which comprised development. In view of the importance acquired by regional organizations, local communities, businesses and non-governmental organizations, the role of the State and the private sector should be reassessed. "An agenda for development" must reflect that diversity and spell out each party's contribution. The State's obligations to regulate market forces must not be underestimated.

In his delegation's view, the document entitled "An agenda for development", submitted by the Secretary-General, was a preliminary document. To its credit, the document clearly outlined the problems that would have to be addressed by a strategy for development for the year 2000. "An agenda for development" was far from being the operational document - at once theoretical and policy-setting - advocated during the previous session of the General Assembly. A genuine United Nations programme of action must be drawn up.

His delegation wished to recall the French proposal that the document should have four main functions. First, it must create an international consensus, in particular with respect to the human, social and environmental

(Mr. Martin, France)

aspects of development, with the United Nations acting as the main forum for universal negotiation. Second, it should constitute an exercise in analysis and evaluation in order to define the conceptual framework for United Nations action on the basis of the Organizations authoritative international position. Such activities were an essential part of a long-term vision and the capacity to plan and evaluate development. Third, it should ensure coordination in order to elaborate more global and more integrated policies, for example through closer links between peace-keeping, humanitarian assistance, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, in order to ensure an effective division of labour among government, intergovernmental, semi-public and private development agents and to establish balanced cooperation among the various United Nations bodies and specialized agencies and consistency with the international financial institutions and world trade organizations. Lastly, it should seek to enhance the effectiveness of field programmes through the reform of UNDP, with particular emphasis on human development and sustainable development activities and, more generally, the decentralization of programmes. It was to be hoped that those elements would contribute to the elaboration of "An agenda for development" that would be a genuine complement to "An agenda for peace".

Mr. ATWOOD (United States of America) commended the work of the Secretary-General on "An agenda for development", which built onto "An agenda for peace" and would help to address the causes of conflict. It was to be hoped that action would be taken on those documents in order to translate the concept of preventive diplomacy and development into reality. The initiative could not be more timely or more necessary, given the new international dynamic. Fundamental issues of peace and war flowed from failures of political, economic and social development. And yet development issues were not yet given the attention they warranted - at great human and monetary cost.

The international community was currently at a crossroads. If it chose the wrong path, crisis situations would grow worse and the risk of anarchy would set in. Conscious of that danger, it must therefore forge new commitments, new approaches and new machinery.

Although the "Agenda for development" should be a central focus and measures should be taken to strengthen it, the most important objective was for the international community to understand that the document could be a crucial

(Mr. Atwood, United States)

weapon in combating chaos. The importance of promoting the cause of preventive diplomacy, whose foundation was a commitment to sustainable development, must be stressed.

The United States believed that several essential elements of the Agenda for Development should be articulated with force and clarity. First was the acknowledgement of the threat, both strategic and mortal, that stemmed from the difficulty of the task to be accomplished. Current crises were increasingly complex and costly. Treating the symptoms of those crises prevented Governments from investing in the prevention of new crises, and attacking their root causes. In 1993, the United Nations had spent more money on peace-keeping than in the previous 45 years. Although that was a legitimate and necessary expense, more preventive measures must be taken in order to reduce the possible outbreaks of crisis. The United States had doubled its expenditure for disaster assistance since 1990. Moreover, it allocated more than 80 per cent of its emergency assistance to cases involving conflict, although they represented only one quarter of all cases requiring a response. That was a formula for disaster, especially in times of increasingly scarce resources. According to the Development Assistance Committee of OECD, contributions by the international community to official development assistance had fallen by 7.8 per cent in 1993. The Agenda for Development must stress the connection between development and the international interests of every nation. If preventive diplomacy was accorded the serious consideration it deserved, development would cease to be its adjunct and would begin to occupy a more central position. Sustainable development was inextricably linked to national security and global peace.

The international community as a whole must take the necessary measures to construct a diplomacy of crisis prevention, and the Agenda for Development should be the standard in that area. Through the Agenda, the concept must be conveyed of the continuum from crisis to development, from chaos to growth, from national disasters and conflicts to the prevention of conflict and its resolution, in addition to peace-keeping activities, food and aid to refugees, arrangements for transition and recovery and long-term sustainable development. Each stage of the transition had characteristic needs, and the way in which they related to each other must be examined and concrete methods developed to address them. The acute needs surrounding natural disasters were, in particular,

(Mr. Atwood, United States)

advance planning, crisis mitigation, assistance to refugees, food aid and general assistance activities. The particular requirements of the post-crisis transition period were peace-keeping, mine clearance, institutional strengthening, economic stabilization, reintegration of combatants, resumption of government services and repatriation of refugees and displaced persons. The long-term needs of sustainable development included the strengthening of democracy, requirements in the areas of population and health, environmental protection and support for broad-based economic growth.

President Clinton's Initiative for the Horn of Africa was an example of that approach. Famine currently threatened 20 million people in that region. That was an example of a complex crisis which had not resulted from a failed crop or from political conflict, but from deficient development, poor planning, short-sighted leadership and disempowerment. The famine early warning system had been the tool used to mitigate the crisis. A regional strategy must be developed that would encompass both recovery and development needs in order to be able to prevent widespread hunger in the region. It was hoped that the Initiative for the Horn of Africa could serve as a model for the international community in responding to regional crises. In order to avoid a cycle of conflict and crisis, the international community must attack the underlying causes and seek long-term solutions.

Cooperation in emergencies was imperative, but it was not enough. In the Agenda for Development, the participation of Member States should be encouraged in all stages of the development process, through interaction not only between Governments, but also between social groups. Effective development must flow from the people to the Government and not from the Government to the people. An Agenda for Development must encourage the participation of everyday citizens, not only experts. Only thus would the development process be placed on a solid, long-term and sustainable foundation.

His delegation celebrated the information age and the enhanced contacts and associations that brought people closer together must be celebrated. The proliferation of non-governmental organizations and the networks they were creating was also encouraging. Even as they represented a challenge to current concepts of sovereignty, they were also creating favourable conditions for peace, stability and an expanded appreciation of democracy.

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(Mr. Atwood, United States)

Preventive diplomacy must begin with improvement in the lives of women. The United States believed that the status of women was the best indicator of whether a society could survive crises and achieve growth. The particular needs of women were usually forgotten or neglected. The report of the Secretary-General did not pay enough attention to the situation of women, viewing it as an adjunct to development and not one of its main objectives. No agenda for development or national growth process could succeed if it failed to address the needs of half of the population.

At the World Summit for Social Development, the World Conference on Women and the International Conference on Population and Development, the United States would attempt to determine whether the international community was preparing an effective response to the problems of development in the post-cold war world. Those international meetings would no doubt provide useful opportunities to share ideas, broaden cooperation and lay the foundations for action. But their true utility would be determined by the deeds that followed.

Willingness to seek solutions in partnership with the developing countries would be one indicator of progress. Another would be activities to follow up the resolutions and decisions that had been adopted with such good intentions. In that respect, the great hopes and promise of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should not be allowed to be lost through inaction and lack of implementation. Agenda 21 remained a useful framework for development cooperation.

A half century earlier, in times of hope and fears, another generation had established the United Nations, with the healthy conceit and the ambitious purpose of remaking the world. The current generation had inherited those hopes for a better future. But it could not focus on current world problems with the vision of that earlier generation, it must build on the past to construct a new vision, a new Charter, a new commitment, a new plan of action. The dreams of the founders of the United Nations must be reformulated. The new plan of action must embody the best values, the noblest dreams and the most ambitious aspirations. The 6 billion human beings inhabiting the planet deserved an agenda for development that communicated optimism and promoted that commitment to the endeavour. Hunger was not inevitable; genocide was not inevitable; poverty was not inevitable. But neither were economic growth and democracy.

(Mr. Atwood, United States)

Neither were progress and peace. The Agenda for Development must express the hopes and expectations of the world.

Mrs. DEGN (Denmark) said it was gratifying that development was once again at the top of the United Nations agenda. Just as Agenda 21 had led to discussions for a more active role for the United Nations in peacemaking and peace-keeping, it was to be hoped that the Agenda for Development would inspire an equally important discussion of the role of the United Nations in development.

"An Agenda for Development" would enhance the global awareness of development problems, and help with the rethinking of development policies. Although peace was rightly said to be a foundation for development, it was also true that, in the long run, peace could not be ensured unless development was achieved. Although the nuclear threat had weakened, it had been replaced by the equally frightening threat of the social and ecological bomb.

In attempting to revitalize United Nations development activities, it was necessary to bear in mind two essential aspects: coordination and priority. After examination of the broad analysis contained in the report, it was appropriate to underline the importance of determining carefully what body should be responsible for putting it into practice, and how and when each activity should be carried out.

The leading principle of global development activities should be poverty orientation. Alleviating the plight of victims of hunger and poverty was the task that should be given topmost priority. To eradicate poverty, it was necessary for many forces to work together; first of all, Governments and parliaments must create a climate fostering initiative and investment, thereby facilitating sustainable economic growth. Such an enabling climate would also include a healthy and well-educated workforce, and systems of solidarity caring for those groups unable to earn an income.

Sustainable development was built on such factors as political freedom and democratic and accountable institutions, as well as economic growth. In that respect, particular attention should be given to the countries of Africa and their concrete needs. In the case of Africa, it was necessary to formulate a long-term development strategy. As part of that strategy, a broad policy focus should be applied to trade, indebtedness, and development assistance. At the same time, more attention should be given to the social consequences of

(Mrs. Degn, Denmark)

structural adjustment, whose short-term negative consequences should be alleviated.

Finally, in defining future poverty-oriented development efforts, three issues should be given particular attention: the role of women in development; the environment; and the promotion of good governance and human rights. Emphasis should be given to women's interests and specific needs; the final text of An Agenda for Development to be presented to the General Assembly should include a better analysis of matters concerning the role of women in the development process.

Experience had shown human rights, democracy and development to be mutually reinforcing. International cooperation in that area could be particularly effective with regard to the holding of free and fair elections, the demobilization of men in the armed forces and their reintegration into civilian work, and also in institution-building. It was on that basis that Denmark targeted its development assistance to those countries that made considered efforts to strengthen the rule of law and good governance.

Visions for future development should include concrete proposals for action. An Agenda for Development should be a blueprint that decision makers could act upon. She therefore strongly urged that, before the draft was presented to the General Assembly, a forward-looking and action-oriented approach should be incorporated into the report.

An Agenda for Development was an important document in the context of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development. Regarding the application of new approaches to the social dimension of development, An Agenda for Development should guide the Summit in its deliberations regarding the possibility of combining social conscience with the traditional economic approaches to development policies. The United Nations, its specialized agencies and the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations, would play a crucial role in the formulation and application of the conclusions of the Copenhagen summit. Denmark therefore urged the close involvement of all interested parties, including non-governmental organizations, in the further elaboration of An Agenda for Development.

Mr. CISSE (Senegal) said the main points of his Government's point of view on An Agenda for Development had been covered in the statement made by the

(Mr. Cisse, Senegal)

representative of Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He would therefore confine himself to emphasizing a few practical matters.

The changes that had taken place in the world since 1989 had given rise to hopes for a new form of international partnership, contributing to durable economic growth and sustainable development in third world countries. Favourable conditions for international cooperation had however been endangered by a resurgence of ethnic and religious conflicts, the emergence in various places of micronationalist movements, and an increase in xenophobia. Those scourges had contributed dangerously to the undermining of the unity and stability of many States. At the same time, poverty had worsened in many countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

The formulation of An Agenda for Development was of vital importance to the achievement of a new world consensus whose principal aim would be to implement existing resolutions, agreements and policies in the area of international economic cooperation, and to the promotion of the role of the United Nations in that field. In that respect, Agenda 21 presented an integrated focus on the development problem which was widely accepted at the highest political levels. For that reason, An Agenda for Development should be considered as more than a document for negotiation; it was a framework for the application of obligations, especially financial obligations, entered into in Agenda 21 and other agreements. In particular, the formulation of an agenda for development must take account of the results of the various world conferences planned for 1994 and 1995.

The fundamental concept upon which An Agenda for Development should be based was that development was closely linked to economic growth and to the equitable distribution of the benefits derived from that growth, on the basis, of course, of the principles of justice, equality and social responsibility. It was necessary to achieve a strong international consensus and a new form of partnership for development, based on a world economy in which much account was taken of the principle of the comparative advantages offered by the gradual but effective integration of developing countries into international commercial and financial systems. To that end a non-discriminatory international trading system must be set up in order to ensure equality of opportunity for all States, beginning with the elimination of protectionist measures.

(Mr. Cisse, Senegal)

However, in that regard it must be noted that preferential treatment should be given to developing countries and efforts should be made to ensure greater equity in the distribution of international financial resources. Senegal welcomed the conclusion of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, although those negotiations had not taken into account all the concerns of developing countries, especially African countries.

Moreover, since there was no single development model that could be applied to all situations, An Agenda for Development should create propitious conditions for the establishment of a new type of world relationship based on the political realities and specific problems of each continent. In that regard, it should be recalled that in order to achieve development in the 1990s and in the decade thereafter, Africa would require a considerable increase in external funding as well as new debt relief measures and a greater share of international trade. Without development, Africa would have no peace and without peace in Africa there would be neither peace nor security in the world.

Mr. FLORES OLEA (Mexico) noted that the agenda for development submitted by the Secretary-General constituted a basis for continuing in-depth discussions on that issue and expressed the hope that it would soon be possible to submit practical and operational proposals that gave new content to deliberations and decisions. The entire United Nations system had a great responsibility in that area.

While Mexico recognized that there were close links between peace, security and economic development, it was averse to establishing hierarchies on the basis of which development was perceived as dependent on the maintenance of international peace and security. Development and cooperation were valid in themselves and were in fact priority objectives of the international community. The international community's most important goal was the comprehensive development of the human being and society as a whole.

Mexico agreed with the Secretary-General that the agenda for development should be considered as a basic tool for coordinating development activities. It should contain a synthesis of all intergovernment agreements reached by various forums and serve as a basis for fulfilling the commitments they contained.

In that regard, Mexico wished to reiterate the appeal made to the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, to make bold efforts

(Mr. Flores Olea, Mexico)

in order to coordinate and pool material and intellectual resources so as to further the advancement of mankind. While it was crucial to maintain peace, individuals, peoples and nations were today calling for better living conditions, better health, better nutrition, better housing, a cleaner environment, recognition of women's role in society, more education and culture, and better technical and vocational training. That herculean effort was necessary not only to meet legitimate demands that had either been put off or had never been addressed but also to guarantee lasting peace and stability among nations.

The agenda being drawn up should be comprehensive and include issues of the traditional development agenda as well as new topics. It should also help to promote multilateral cooperation, avoiding unnecessary duplication, and foster a universal dialogue so as to revitalize the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations taking into account the challenges and needs of the modern world, especially the needs of developing countries, which were hardest hit by poverty.

The agenda should cover all the dimensions of development and therefore required the efforts and cooperation of the entire United Nations system. The diagnosis of each of the topics in An Agenda for Development should be accompanied by measures to be applied by countries, the international community and agencies of the United Nations system and should include an implementation timetable and follow-up mechanisms for the commitments and measures agreed upon. The agenda should also promote better ties between the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the future World Trade Organization.

Development should be based on a structural approach and on a deliberate policy of redistribution of wealth, because crises and conflicts could be avoided only through the establishment of appropriate social and economic conditions.

Recent experience had demonstrated that the operation of market forces did not of itself necessarily guarantee economic growth and an improvement in the living conditions of the people. It was crucial to seek solutions that reconciled growth with the equitable distribution of wealth and with the values of a pluralist and democratic society.

(Mr. Flores Olea, Mexico)

At the same time, new mechanisms must be agreed upon for revitalizing international cooperation, the globalization of production processes and markets and increased interdependence must be matched by a global approach to development issues, with responsibility being shared between international agencies and nations, taking into account the differences between countries and addressing the needs of the least developed countries on a priority basis.

An Agenda for Development should ensure that the measures undertaken by the United Nations system were coherent and consistent, since they were inspired by the common aim of achieving progress and sustainable development based on justice for all countries.

Mr. RAMÍREZ BOETTNER (Paraguay) said that in the current interdependent world, development called for international cooperation in order to promote, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, solutions to problems of an economic, social, cultural and humanitarian character as well as respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all. Development meant eradicating poverty, illiteracy, hunger and preventable diseases that decimated populations. The advancement of mankind would strengthen peace and prevent the desperation and discontent which often led to violence. The United Nations was the prime agency of international technical cooperation for development, and since its inception had played a crucial role in the fulfilment of those objectives; however, the methods of such cooperation must be tailored to modern times, on the basis of the experience gained, in order to enhance their efficiency.

Development called for economic advancement and increased availability of resources to meet social goals that all aspired to, as well as international cooperation in the technical and financial spheres. The United Nations system should play a more central role in international cooperation, because of its impartiality and because its sole aim was to improve the economic and social well-being of developing countries. The allocation of resources among programmes and projects by the United Nations was unbalanced: in particular, the share allocated to the Latin American region in particular, was unfair.

Development was a basic responsibility of countries, although experience demonstrated that the cooperation of the United Nations system constituted a fundamental element in providing guidance and in the adoption of new technologies. The United Nations system must be strengthened in order to

(Mr. Ramírez Boettner, Paraguay)

improve programming flexibility, so as to adjust cooperation to the needs of each country without imposing models, while keeping in mind the differences between countries and regions and their varying needs. The wise recommendations of the Jackson Report, which remained valid despite the changing situation, should be borne in mind in that connection. Moreover, the coordination of United Nations agencies in the implementation of programmes and projects must be improved.

Given the ongoing globalization of economies and the emergence of new problems, cooperation had to become more creative. New problems such as drug trafficking had to be eliminated through a joint effort on the part of the developed and the developing countries. More flexibility was needed in the trading system, with emphasis on freedom of trade; the Uruguay Round constituted a first step in that regard.

As another means of promoting development, his Government was carrying out an intensive campaign against corruption both in the public administration and in private enterprise in order to prevent the illicit use of national funds.

Development had to follow a more comprehensive criterion, based primarily on education, without which improvement in health, job creation and the quality of national production would be difficult to attain. Education had also to absorb and communicate scientific knowledge of new technologies in order to accelerate the growth of developing countries.

Improvement was also needed in the relationship between technical and financial cooperation, so that the flow of investments would follow the technical cooperation undertaken in different fields. Financing had to be carried out more rapidly and with less bureaucratic inefficiency, and there was a need to create new sources of support for production processes, finance small- and medium-sized enterprises, and resolve the job shortage. The problem of unemployment was linked to that of inordinate population growth in developing countries. It was to be hoped that solutions would be arrived at during the upcoming Cairo Conference that would permit immoderate population growth to be restrained and the problems to which it gave rise avoided.

His delegation strongly supported the concept of sustained and sustainable development that protected the environment without impeding progress.

Since 1989, Paraguay had been striving to re-establish democracy and preserve all freedoms through a substantial reform of its institutions, with the

(Mr. Ramírez Boettner, Paraguay)

goal of accelerating economic and social development. It was fulfilling the high principles of the United Nations with absolute respect for human rights, while seeking the greatest well-being for its people. Those efforts had to be backed up by the cooperation of the international community, particularly with the landlocked countries which needed more opportunities to counteract their disadvantages.

Mr. DIOUF (Director General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that a development programme had to give priority to the rural population, as they represented more than half of the world's population and almost two thirds of that of the developing world.

Food security was an indispensable element of human security, inasmuch as history showed that political stability and social progress were incompatible with hunger. Furthermore, agriculture in general depended on the natural resource base. As noted in the findings of the Rio de Janeiro Conference and of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations held in Morocco, world action on behalf of durable and equitable systems of production and consumption had to assign broad importance to agriculture.

Of course, providing food security for all was a complex task. Projections indicated that malnutrition would remain high in developing countries, and that the net food deficit in those countries would continue to increase. Despite that fact, the assistance provided by multilateral and bilateral bodies had diminished.

To free countries from the most pressing problems related to the lack of food security, development results must be markedly improved in the context of a policy of poverty reduction and more equitable distribution of benefits. First and foremost, Governments would have to meet that challenge, but the international community had also to lend them the necessary assistance. In that respect, he stressed the support of the FAO Council for his proposals to revitalize the work of the organization and make it more effective, which were based on the principles of reordering priorities, decentralization, rationalization of operational activities, increasing efficiency and reduction of the cost of the modalities of action.

In future, the emphasis would be placed on the need to increase food production and productivity by means of a special programme of support for low-income countries, and priority would be given to the countries of Africa.

(Mr. Diouf)

The organization's work would however not yield the hoped-for results without active collaboration with other organizations. For that reason, he had adopted a variety of initiatives to strengthen and broaden FAO cooperation with the agencies and bodies of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental and non-governmental institutions, and the private sector.

An Agenda for Development had to assign to food security the importance it deserved as the foundation of the biological and ethical integrity of mankind. In that respect, he noted that an ever-growing portion of official development assistance was currently being devoted to crisis situations and emergency aid, whereas crisis prevention and the solution of structural problems were much less costly and more lasting in their impact than emergency interventions and the maintenance of a state of dependency.

In his opinion, it was incumbent on the Economic and Social Council to ensure that the potential of the United Nations system, the specialized agencies and the financial institutions was used efficiently and coherently in dealing with the problems of development. It was necessary to promote concrete and efficient aid that would translate into an improvement in the situation of the poorest people on the planet.

The PRESIDENT noted that at the conclusion of the present part of the high-level session he would be preparing conclusions in which the recommendations that participants wished to formulate could be incorporated. In his opinion, it was the time to move from words to actions. He recalled that the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and many speakers had pointed out that the United Nations system was not functioning effectively, and that proposals for concrete change were needed.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.